

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 295

By Cohen

A RESOLUTION to honor and recognize Lebanese Americans and thank them their many contributions to our society.

WHEREAS, the rich history of Lebanon dates back to 4000 B.C.; and

WHEREAS, the recorded history of Lebanon begins with a group of coastal cities and heavily forested mountains inhabited by a group of Canaanites, called Phoenicians by the Greeks, around 4000 B.C.; the Canaanites, or Phoenicians, would later establish a commercial maritime empire; and

WHEREAS, after being under the dominion of the Persians, the Macedonians, and the Romans at various times, Lebanon became a part of a reunified Middle East under the Ottoman Turks in the early 16th century, and enjoyed considerable autonomy under Ottoman rule; and

WHEREAS, after World War I, France was given a League of Nations mandate over Lebanon; pursuant to a treaty, Lebanon achieved independence on January 1, 1944, and became of a member of the United Nations in 1945; and

WHEREAS, in early 1975, Lebanon became embroiled in a civil war that would escalate into a succession of conflicts spanning nearly three decades; on April 26, 2005, after 29 years of occupation, the last of remaining Syrian troops were finally withdrawn from Lebanon; and

WHEREAS, just as our forefathers prevailed in attaining our independence from the British, the people of Lebanon have prevailed in regaining their independence from the Syrians; and

WHEREAS, through the Cedar Revolution, Lebanon has been successful in throwing off the yoke of oppression and occupation by the Syrians; the Lebanese have demonstrated their

great love and yearning for freedom by rising up in a non-violent manner to align their Nation with the free and democratic countries of the world; and

WHEREAS; Lebanese Americans have made significant contributions to our society in all facets of life, including the arts, sports, entertainment, the military, politics, and through the creation of several charitable organizations; and

WHEREAS, the late Danny Thomas was an American comedic legend. During the early period of his career, Mr. Thomas was still a struggling entertainer who could not support a family with his chosen career. He visited a church in Detroit and prayed to St. Jude: "Show me my way in life and I will build you a shrine." A few weeks later, Mr. Thomas landed a regular job at a Chicago nightclub. Later, Danny founded St. Jude Hospital in Memphis, which has become the world's premier institution for the study and treatment of catastrophic childhood diseases. Today, largely because of discoveries made at St. Jude, more than 70 percent of children diagnosed with certain forms of leukemia survive compared to the only 5 percent survival rate prior to St. Jude being founded; and

WHEREAS, the late Frank Zappa was a legend in the world of rock. Mr. Zappa released many great albums throughout the course of his life and numerous great songs, including: *The Chrome Plated Megaphone of Destiny*, *Man with the Woman Head*, and *You Are What You Is*. Mr. Zappa is survived by two sons, Dweezil and Ahmet, and two daughters, Moon Unit and Diva Muffin; and

WHEREAS, the late U.S. Navy Lieutenant Alfred Naifeh is a true American military hero. In 1942, he was serving on the *USS Meredith* in the Solomon Islands. The ship was struck by a massive Japanese air raid and rapidly sunk. Lt. Naifeh worked for two days and nights locating his wounded shipmates and placing them aboard life rafts. On the third day, he died of exhaustion after fighting off shark attacks and rescuing many of his compatriots. He was posthumously awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Medal and the Purple Heart for his heroics. In 1944, one of the U.S. Navy's ships, the destroyer *USS Naifeh* was named in his honor; and

WHEREAS, Paul Anka was born in Ottawa, Canada in 1941 to Lebanese parents. He is unique among the late fifties teen idols in that he is not only a singer, but also a successful songwriter and composer. Among his many hits are: *Puppy Love* recorded by Donny Osmond,

Frank Sinatra's *My Way* for which he was the lyricist, and *She's a Lady* which was popularized by recording star Tom Jones. To date, he has amassed worldwide record sales in excess of \$100 million; and

WHEREAS, John Elway was the #1 overall pick in the NFL's famous quarterback draft of 1983. He was known for his last-minute, game-winning scoring drives. He led the Broncos to 3 Super Bowl appearances before posting back-to-back wins in Super Bowl XXXII and XXXIII. Honored as the 1987 NFL MVP, Mr. Elway is a 4-time Pro Bowler and, along with Dan Marino, is one of only two NFL quarterbacks to throw for over 50,000 yards in his career; and

WHEREAS, Doug Flutie won the Heisman Trophy as the quarterback for Boston College football in 1984. He has played in the USFL, NFL and CFL. He is a 6-time CFL MVP with the B.C. Lions (1991), Calgary (1992-94) and Toronto (1996-97). He led Calgary and Toronto to Grey Cup titles. Mr. Flutie returned to NFL in 1998 with Buffalo and signed with the San Diego Chargers in 2001. He spends much of his time off the field working with The Doug Flutie Foundation which helps sick children;

WHEREAS, Jamie Farr, born Jameel Farah, is best known for his role as Corporal Maxwell Q. Klinger in the classic hit television show *M*A*S*H*. His *M*A*S*H* character was originally set to appear on only one episode, but he proved to be so popular that he returned as a day player. Farr was eventually given a contract as a regular in year 3 of the series; and

WHEREAS, the late Fred Saigh was the former owner of the St. Louis Cardinals baseball team. He founded the Saigh Foundation to serve as his personal legacy through the many generous gifts he gave throughout his lifetime to the community of St. Louis, Missouri. The Foundation benefits children and youth, primarily in the areas of education and health care; and

WHEREAS, Neil Sedaka is an actor, composer, singer and entertainer. He was part of the famous Brill Building stable of songwriters, which included Barry Mann and Cynthia Weil, Neil Diamond and Carole King; and

WHEREAS, from the aforementioned examples, it is clear that Lebanese Americans have made and continue to make many valuable contributions in all aspects of our society, and they should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that this General Assembly hereby honors and commends the 3 million Lebanese Americans for the important role they have played and continue to play in making the United States of America a democratic nation where individual initiative and achievement reign supreme and a beacon of liberty, justice, philanthropy, and humanity for the world at large.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this General Assembly expresses its most sincere hope for the re-establishment of a peaceful and successful democracy, without foreign influence, in Lebanon.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an enrolled copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Embassy of Lebanon in Washington, D.C.